

To: eroberso@blm.gov[eroberso@blm.gov]; abilbao@blm.gov[abilbao@blm.gov];
mjrichardson@blm.gov[mjrichardson@blm.gov]; lmbryant@blm.gov[lmbryant@blm.gov]
From: Gary Torres
Sent: 2017-11-03T23:45:54-04:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Fwd: Draft Memo for your review
Received: 2017-11-03T23:46:02-04:00
[ATT00001.htm](#)
[Memo to DM - BLM Senator Lee Staffers Meeting and Film Request- short version.docx](#)
[CONVERSATION RECORDS Lisa Bryant Matt Holton Oct 31-Nov 3 2017.docx](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)

Lisa: Very well done. I have a few minor changes that I will suggest but for the time being I will send up to Mike, Ed and Anita so as to provide the information timely. I appreciate your thoroughness and candor.

Team, we can make adjustments tomorrow if necessary.

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Bryant, Lisa" <lmbryant@blm.gov>
Date: November 3, 2017 at 9:32:34 PM MDT
To: Gary Torres <gtorres@blm.gov>
Subject: Draft Memo for your review

This is a second shorter version of a memo and its still probably too long.

I decided not to list the detailed conversation record as an attachment to the memo. I note its existence and that its available if requested. Hopefully no one asks, its six pages, no one wants to plough through that. I attached it for you just in case you need it during your review.

Holler if you need to see the longer more detailed version of this memo. I'll have my laptop with me this weekend and can send you additional materials or revise/edit whatever is needed. I need to come in anyway to take care of the notebook for Ed and letter for Don. I'd rather do it when the copier isn't in use or I'm scrambling to load the car Monday morning.

I have a few commitments tomorrow between 10-1 and 2-3, but can help between 1-2 or after 3 pm. I'll keep my work phone with me the entire time and you can contact me as needed.

Thanks as always for your support.

Lisa Bryant
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United States Department of the Interior



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In Reply Refer To:
1120 (LLUTY00000)

Memorandum

To: District Manager, Canyon Country District

From: Public Affairs Specialist, Canyon Country District

Subject: Meetings and discussions between BLM and congressional staffers from Senator Lee's office, Oct. 31 - Nov. 3, 2017.

The announcement and subsequent review of the Bears Ears National Monument (BENM) has sparked heated debate in southeastern Utah; groups are passionate on both sides. Careful messaging is important regarding the eventual outcome of the review conducted by the Secretary. Consistent messages from everyone will contribute to the eventual success of implementing the final monument configuration.

Direction from the BLM Utah Leadership has been consistent and clear. Employees are well aware of the importance of being neutral rather than taking positions publicly or privately. Public affairs staff has coordinated all inquiries regarding the BENM with Washington Office and Department of Interior.

Recently, two staffers from the Office of Senator Lee were in the Moab area to attend the annual Moab Business Summit and conduct filming in Grand and San Juan County. While inquiring about filming permits, Matt Holton, Director of Business Outreach for Senator Lee, also invited BLM and National Park Service (NPS) officials to an informal "meet and greet" over coffee. It was apparent his questions about filming that he was unfamiliar with the area and the federal land management agencies, including an understanding of who managed the BENM. It seemed to be a good opportunity to provide him with information about public lands and ensure they were aware of best practices when filming in sensitive areas.

On Tuesday Nov. 1, 2017, approximately 9:30 a.m. Lisa Bryant, BLM Public Affairs Specialist; Christina Price, Moab Field Manager; Kate Cannon, Superintendent of

Southeast Utah Group for the NPS; and Jeannine McElveen, Superintendent Natural Bridges National Monument, NPS met with Matt Holton and a communications specialist, Mike Jolley. The conversation was very pleasant and focused primarily on a proposal for a reservation system at Arches National Park and the recent announcement of a proposed fee increase for National Park Passes. There were other topics covered including a brief discussion of BENM. There was no discussion of BLM preference for the outcome of the pending decision from the Administration regarding BENM, nor any mention of the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument.

Early afternoon that same day, the Canyon Country Acting District Manager received an inquiry regarding the meeting between the BLM and the staffers, and remarks made by Matt Holton, which were overheard by a local reporter while attending the Moab Business Summit. The remarks cast doubt on BLM's support of the Secretary of Interior's recommendations to the President regarding BENM. BLM was immediately concerned with the potential damage such a statement could create in tenuous relations with local county officials and community members.

The incident was discreetly elevated to upper management. The BLM Utah State Director had a previously scheduled meeting with Senator Lee in Washington D.C. the following day, Thursday Nov. 2, 2017. He used the opportunity to affirm BLM's support of Secretary Zinke's recommendations and the President's pending decisions regarding BENM. He shared his concern regarding the inquiry BLM received, and the importance of consistent messaging from everyone to ensure success in implementing the President's decision.

Matt contacted Lisa Bryant that same afternoon. He called to thank her for her help with filming locations and meeting with him the day before. Matt assured her that neither she nor Christina had misrepresented BLM's position of support regarding pending BENM changes; and in fact the discussion surrounding BENM had been very brief. Matt explained what had happened the previous day at the Business Summit and apologized for any misunderstanding or inconvenience it may have caused. There had been no intention to misrepresent or speak on behalf of BLM.

On Friday Nov 3, 2017 about 4 pm, Matt stopped by the BLM office on his way out of town. He stopped to thank Lisa for her help and said they had gotten some really good film footage and photos and it had been a great visit. They briefly discussed the communication incident and importance of consistent messaging.

Lisa prepared a detailed conversation record (available upon request) and discussed the incident with the District Manager. These are the conclusions:

- 1) There was no intention on anyone's part to misrepresent BLM or Department of Interior;
- 2) All parties are fully aware of the importance of communicating full support for the Secretary of Interior's recommendations and President's decision;
- 3) The reporter did not pursue a story, nor have we seen fallout in social media; and
- 4) This was a good learning moment about the sensitivity of the topic and importance of

consistent messaging, even in casual conversations.

Recommendation: Move forward with consistent messaging and let this matter go.



CONVERSATION RECORD

Date/Time:	Several conversations between 10/31/17 and 11/3/17
Type:	Phone, in person, and text
With:	Matt Holton primarily, one in person with Mike Jolley
Representing:	Senator Lee's Staff
Subject:	The initial request was regarding filming in Grand and San Juan Counties on Public Lands. There were follow up conversations regarding the conversation he had with a San Juan resident at the Annual Business Summit in Moab.

Name of Person Documenting Conversation: Lisa Bryant

10/31/17:

Matt Holton, staffer for Senator Lee, contacted Norbert Norton, Realty specialist for Monticello Field Office, and left a brief phone message that was hard to understand. Norbert sent an email with the name he thought he'd heard, and number to me, Lisa Bryant, because the phone message sounded like a media request.

I returned the call, realized he was with Senator Lee's office, and immediately after the call with Matt, notified appropriate managers, state office public affairs, and Kim Finch, Utah Legislative Affairs liaison in DC. After speaking with Kim and hearing Senator Lee was due to meet with Ed Roeberson in Washington D.C. the following day, I called Matt back to confirm that we were meeting with him, not Senator Lee, which Matt confirmed. Matt also inquired about availability of managers to meet with him while he was here (Wed. in Moab, Thurs. in Monticello) as a trust building meet and greet opportunity. I said I'd ask about manager availability.

Matt called back later asking for contact information for Kate Cannon with the National Park Service (I had referred him to them for several of the proposed filming locations), and the second time inviting me and BLM managers to meet for coffee on Wed. morning, which we agreed to do. I said that the Moab manager and I might be able to meet on Wednesday, however Don Hoffheins, the Monticello Manager was unavailable on Thursday. I said Don would be willing to meet another time.

I also followed up with an email to Matt regarding filming in the area, including stipulations we have been providing members of the media that film in the area.

11/1/17:

Christina Price and Lisa Bryant joined Matt Holton and his coworker, Michael Jolley at an outdoor coffee house in downtown Moab approximately 9:30 a.m. Kate Cannon and Jeannine McElveen, of the National Park Service were already present.

Everyone introduced themselves. There were some pleasant joking about a coworker of Matt's with the same name as Kate's. Matt talked about the purpose of the visit (obtaining photos/videos to highlight unique features in each county and attending the Moab Business Summit). He said he was the Business Outreach Director for Senator Lee, which is why he was here for the meeting in Moab. He also introduced Mike and his position as a communications specialist. He explained that due to a knee injury, he wouldn't be doing much hiking. Mike

would be the main videographer/photographer and they'd brought walkie talkies to communicate. He thanked Jeannine for helping them prepare, as she was the one that had warned them that cell service was poor in some areas of San Juan County. I think at this point, he also asked for some basic facts about when Natural Bridges NM and Hovenweep NM were established, which Kate and Jeannine answered (NBNM - 1908, *I didn't hear the other date*).

The majority of the conversation centered on National Park Service and a pending proposal for a reservation system in Arches, and also the recent Department announcements of fee increases. Kate provided a power point with some helpful information about visitation and explained the reservation system plan and why it was being proposed.

Matt also asked about the proposed fee increases to the parks. Kate answered Matt's questions and clarified that the proposed fee increase was a separate proposal from the reservation system for Arches. She said the fee increase was a Department of Interior proposal and did not speculate or speak for the Department. She confirmed that within the first few days of the comment period they had received 30,000 to 40,000 comments. She and Jeannine both spoke generally about how park user fees are distributed and used, including restrictions on user fees, which sometimes doesn't address some of the park's support and infrastructure needs. They answered questions regarding current and proposed fees and different types of passes.

There's was additional discussion of visitors and increased visitation through much of southeastern Utah. Moab and other towns were finding opportunities in that and feeling the growing pains. For example, Moab has five new hotels either recently completed or under construction, but also sewer capacity issues. Kate discussed the goal of the reservation system to spread out use more evenly, provide a better visitor experience, while extending use into the shoulder seasons, and providing more sustainability for local residents through employment and business opportunities.

The discussion turned to San Juan County - Jeannine highlighted opportunities there. Kate talked about the importance of planning to gateway communities when looking at increased visitation and developing tourism. Christina spoke about the visit from Secretary Jewell the previous year and the large number of visitors to a small area. Jeannine added that Bluff had just added or remodeled a really nice new hotel. Christina talked briefly about a proposal to improve the Hook and Ladder ATV Trailhead area, in northern San Juan County.

Following that was a brief discussion of Corona Arch, one of the proposed filming locations. Christina answered questions regarding deaths that occurred there and Gemini Bridges. I explained that it was obtained in 2014 as part of a land exchange with Utah State Trust Lands Administration, which gained valuable mineral parcels near Vernal, UT as part of the exchange.

At one point in the conversation, Matt asked where each of us was from and we each answered. I think it followed a brief discussion of Mike's background.

The discussion turned to the Bears Ears National Monument (BENM). We discussed who managed the areas (BLM/USFS) and the common misconception that the NPS managed all national monuments, which was a mistake that Matt made at first.

Christina clarified that the primary difference was that no new ROWs would be offered and I added or new leases for hard rock or fluid minerals. Christina also made the point that existing ROWs would be honored. I added that we were currently managing the areas based on our 2008 Resource Management Plans for each office. We discussed the fact that grazing, ATV/OHV, fire wood gathering, and other traditional uses, as well as recreation were all still allowed and managed according to the Resource Management Plans.

They asked about existing mining and white mesa mill. I explained that the most recently operating mine, Daneros, was outside the monument boundary, but accessed by roads within the monument. I said the mine was not in operation due to low deflated markets right now. Mines in the area were predominantly uranium and in fact the BENM contained a historic mining district. She said that White Mesa Mill was in operation, had state of the art facilities, and was processing ore and reworking tailings locally and also importing some. Kate added that she thought some ore being processed there was from the Ticaboo Mine in the Richfield BLM office.

Kate said in her experience, putting a boundary and names of key features on a map can serve to attract visitors. In this instance although a boundary was drawn, the area remained in the same in terms of management responsibility -- BLM and USFS. Lisa provided a map from the BLM website, showing the area to help provide context and to aid them in their filming efforts.

Matt asked about the sizes of national monuments. Jeannine answered that it varied greatly, pointing to the size of Natural Bridges as one of the smaller monuments. Kate added that larger monuments started being designated in the 1990's.

I can't remember exactly when in this part of the conversation Matt mentioned it, but he said there'd been a conversation with Senator Lee and the President the previous week, and alluded to the monument shrinking and said he'd heard numbers indicating it would be much smaller. At that point I deflected with humor, joking that he knew more than I did. *(I missed an opportunity to say how much we were looking forward to the announcement, and supporting the administration and secretary, but I was focused on being very neutral, which has been our position for so long.)*

There was discussion of visitors to the parks overflowing to surrounding public lands.

We also discussed differences in National Park's visitor focus and preservation mission versus BLM's Multiple Use Mission, and that the Bears Ears National Monument supported many traditional uses, including grazing, motorized and non-motorized recreation, fire-wood gathering. Matt brought up the cultural resources and how much he enjoyed working with various tribes. Christina and Matt both reiterated that almost everyone agreed about the importance of cultural resources in this region providing common ground for seeking solutions.

Matt said yes there was agreement, and saw the value in the conversation we were having at that moment for building trust, even though we may not agree on the best way to resolve issues, it was good to work through them; and that once we solved these problems there'd be a whole new set to work on, and Jeannine joked "opportunities" not problems. He agreed with a smile and said we were all looking forward to the decision regarding the monument so we could move forward and we all nodded in the affirmative to that.

Kate asked Matt what he'd been hearing regarding feedback on the reservation system from his constituents and concerns regarding the fee increase. He talked about the concerns he'd heard from business owners that visitors could be denied entry and general concerns about locals not being able to afford parks.

The conversation wrapped up, it had been very pleasant and friendly. Business cards were exchanged, I didn't have one, but had sent an email to Matt and planned to send one to Mike with my contact information.

As the meeting broke up, I spoke directly with Mike regarding film locations referring to the list of sites attached to filming stipulations provided for their reference and provided a quick run-down of the list I'd provided, regarding access (drive, hikes required, etc.) and suggestions sites better suited for aerial footage using UASs (drones).

I also offered to look into B-roll and photographs for these areas that I could provide for their use.

I returned to the office and forwarded my original email to Matt, to Mike, so he would also have it, as he was the photographer.

Approximately two hours or so later I was contacted by Gary Torres, asking about the conversation. He'd been contacted by a local reporter and friend, fact checking BLM's position, after overhearing Matt telling a San Juan County resident at the Business Summit that "he had just met with BLM officials and they wanted to keep the monument as it was".

I said we'd all been very careful to be neutral, but provide him with information, as it was very clear he was unfamiliar with public lands issues. I was horrified that somehow Matt may have been given the wrong impression.

I spoke first with Christina, she did not hear anything that would have indicated that in our conversation, but offered me counsel saying she thought I dominated the conversation and interrupted Kate more than once. She said she'd talked to Gary and assured him that she hadn't heard anything that would have given Matt that impression, but she hadn't heard the side conversation that I had with Mike.

I contacted Kate Cannon, she said she clearly had not heard anything that would have given Matt that impression in our conversations and she had been listening intently. She was aware he was very unfamiliar with land management agencies and thought it had been a good opportunity to help him learn more about what we do, especially since staffers often respond to questions from constituents about land management issues. She had been listening to ensure he clearly understood and could articulate the rationale for the proposed reservation system at Arches. I also asked about my interrupting (*it's a terrible habit of mine and I was concerned I might have offended her*) – she assured me that she hadn't noticed it or felt like it had been a problem.

I called Gary back reporting my conversations with Christina and Kate and began a detailed conversation record, mostly to analyze how I might do better next time in ensuring the correct messages are heard when meeting with people. Gary said he'd talked with Ed and Anita and that in his previously scheduled meeting with the Senator, Ed planned to reiterate and emphasize our

support for the Secretary of Interior and Administration and that we looked forward to moving ahead once we receive direction regarding changes to the monuments.

I did not discuss any of this further with Christina as she had left the office and was out the rest of the week.

I spoke again with Gary the next morning, who said he'd talked with the reporter again to reassure him that BLM had not said anything in our meeting with the staffers to the effect that BLM was not in favor of changes to monument size or in any way unsupportive of the Department or Administration. The reporter did not intend to write about the incident.

I also contacted Kate Canon in the morning to close the loop, so she knew how BLM intended to handle it. She reassured me that conversations with legislators and staffers were important to help them understand what we do as land management agencies so they can more accurately relay that information when talking with the public or state and local government officials. Not to fear them because of this misunderstanding. She attributed the situation to Matt's inexperience with land management issues.

11/2/17:

Don had left me a phone message to say his plans for the day had changed and he could be available if I was coming down with the Senator's staffers. I said they had indicated they were primarily there to film and photograph the area and I hadn't planned on joining them. I briefed him on the situation and we decided it was prudent not to change plans and meet with them.

Matt contacted me in the early afternoon to thank me for my help and say they'd had success in obtaining the photos and video. I obviously was concerned about what we'd been hearing and point blank asked him if I had said, done, or omitted saying that might have given him the impression that BLM wasn't anything but fully supportive of the recommendations we were anticipating from the Department of Interior and the Administration regarding Bears Ears National Monument? He grasped immediately my concern and what I was referring too. He apologized for any trouble, reassured me that I had not done anything to give him an incorrect impression or otherwise be anything other than supportive of Department efforts regarding the monuments. He said we hardly discussed Bears Ears at all. He went on to describe the conversation he'd had at the meeting, indicating it was a resident from San Juan County that was passionately opposed to the monument and government in general, including him, and in the course of the conversation he'd said something to the effect that BLM was a large agency and had people with many views and some probably wanted to keep the monument the same. He thought that maybe the person heard what they wanted based on their views and opinions. He had not intended to create an impression that BLM did not support changes to the monument. I thanked him for his reassurance and that he understood our BLM offices are looking forward getting direction and being able to move forward and implement whatever guidance we get from the Department and the Administration. He said they were staying in Moab another night to continue filming and offered to buy me dinner to make up for any trouble that might have been caused. I thanked him and said that wasn't necessary. I said if they were looking for something

to do and wanted to get some small town flavor, there was a free concert at Star Hall that night with local musicians. He said they might go.

I reported this conversation to Gary. Later in the day, I also responded to Don Hoffheins in an unrelated email and closed the loop, informing him that Matt had not intended to misrepresent BLM's position and understood clearly BLM's support for the Department and Administration in this matter.

11/3/17, 4:20 p.m. - Matt Holton stopped by the office to thank me for my help with the filming. We briefly discussed the incident and he wanted to reassure me again that I hadn't done anything or said anything to give him an incorrect impression. He said it wasn't necessary to overstate BLM's support for the Secretary or President, because it goes without saying. He had just talked with his Communications Chief and they were trying to communicate to their management that this was settled and it should just be let go. I said that's we were hoping as well. He offered to talk to anyone and ensure them that BLM nor I, had done anything to give a misimpression or stated preference about the monument's size or management. Most of the misunderstanding seemed to stem from the person at the business summit that he'd been speaking with.

He handed me a gift certificate, which he said was to a local restaurant, Twisted Sister. I tried to refuse it, he assured me it was okay & within ethics standards to accept. To end the conversation and not draw things out, I accepted, but have not opened it, nor do I intend to. He again reiterated that he hoped there were no ramifications for me and offered to talk to anyone if necessary. I thanked him and reassured him that shouldn't be necessary.

I asked if they got the film footage they needed and he said yes, it had worked out really well. He'd even enjoyed the free concert and had seen the first two acts with the kids playing fiddle and the young woman who played banjo, and thanked me for the recommendation, they'd had a great visit.